

THE QUESTION OF BETTER ROADS.

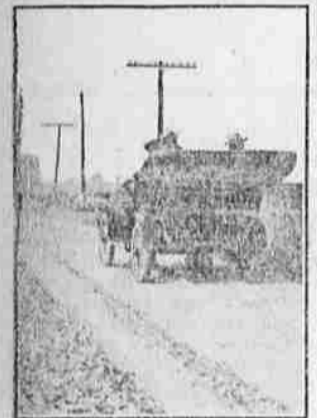
As far back as 1776 Adam Smith, in his "Wealth of Nations," wrote as follows: "Good roads, canals and navigable rivers, by diminishing the expense of carriage, put the remote parts of the country more nearly upon a level with those in the neighborhood of the town. They are upon that account the greatest of all improvements. They encourage the cultivation of the remote, which must always be the most expensive circle of the country. They are advantageous to the town by breaking down the monopoly of the country in its neighborhood. Though they introduce some rival commodities into the old market, they open many new markets to its produce."

WHAT IS THE BEST ROAD? DEPENDS ON CIRCUMSTANCES

Traffic the Chief Factor in Determining Type of Construction.

Given complete data as regards location, traffic and all other conditions, the expert in highway construction can advise intelligently as to the kind of pavement which will most nearly meet the requirements in a given case, but without the complete information he cannot hope to give any satisfactory answer, says Wood Roads.

Before the advent of the automobile, when the traffic consisted of horse drawn vehicles, equipped for the most part with iron tires, water bound macadam was the standard construction for practically all roads except those carrying the heaviest traffic. But present traffic conditions are different. The vehicles using the roads consist not only of horse drawn vehicles equipped with iron tires, but also of motor driven vehicles equipped with rubber tires. Moreover, these two dissimilar kinds are found in varying proportions. At present there is no standard type of construction. Roads or streets carrying light traffic can be satisfactorily paved with certain materials, those carrying a heavier traffic can be paved



MACADAM WAS THE STANDARD BEFORE THE AUTOMOBILE

properly with certain other materials, and those carrying the heaviest traffic require still other kinds of pavements. Considering these facts, the logical conclusion is that traffic is the chief factor in determining the type of construction to be adopted. It is also known that the two different types of vehicles now using the highways require different surfaces. It may be inferred, therefore, that so long as the traffic is mixed, and mixed in varying proportions, a pavement that will be universally satisfactory will not be found unless the amount of one or the other of the two kinds of traffic becomes small enough to be negligible. We can be certain that motor driven vehicles will never become negligible factors, so that the next step to be taken is to consider whether or not the ratio between motor driven and horse drawn vehicles will ever become so great as to eliminate the latter from consideration. If this does happen the situation will be similar to that before the advent of the automobile, and we shall have a traffic varying only in intensity. In that case some certain pavement may be evolved which will be as universally acceptable as was the water bound macadam pavement under former conditions.

Unless this change in traffic does come about it seems probable that the selection of the type of pavement to be put down will remain a problem which has to be solved for each particular road, having due regard to local considerations.

FOR UNIFORM ROAD LAWS.

American Bar and American Highway Associations Undertake Revision.

Through the cooperation of the American Bar Association and the American Highway Association, the work of revising the road laws in different states has been undertaken with the object of codifying and simplifying them on a uniform basis. The laws of the road laws are a century old, based on colonial legislation and following English precedent and are entirely out of use in modern traffic conditions. Because of these obsolete laws it is impossible to give the nation a network of improved highways, so a change must be made. The committee will urge upon the governors of the various states the necessity for legislative action and will make a plan for such procedure.

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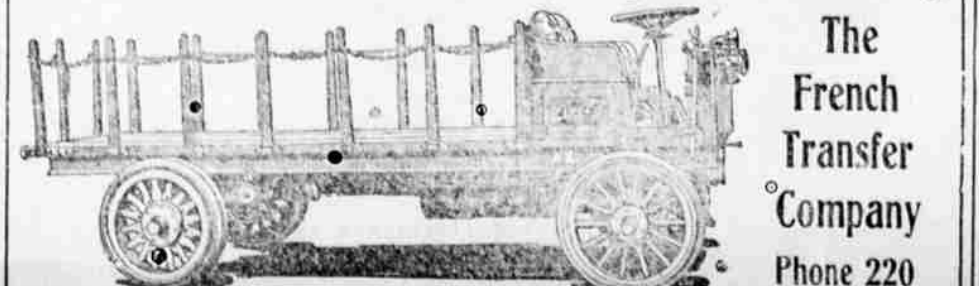
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